

ADOT US 60 AND WILLIAMS GATEWAY CORRIDOR DEFINITION STUDIES
Public Open House
Meeting Summary Notes

Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2005; 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Peralta Trails Elementary School, Gold Canyon Ranch

Re: Joint US 60 & Williams Gateway Corridor Definition Studies

The following meeting notes are intended to be a summary of the discussions at the meeting. Any changes or corrections to the meeting summary notes must be received by the author within ten days. After that date, the Project Team will proceed with the project based on the information outlined in these meeting summary notes.

THOSE PRESENT:

M. Ackerson, Roc Arnett, Louis W. Babin, Steve Baker, Joan Baumstarck, Roger and Barb Bednarz, Don Beets, Edward Beltrane, Vicki Bever, Don Bluchler, Brent Bowden, Joe Brendel, Genevieve Bricker, Jean Buckborough, Matt Burdick, Dorothy Bushno, Craig Cardon, Donald Cline, Greg Collier, Mike Cooney, Barbara Cox, Robert Cunningham, Steve and Kay Curry, Waldron Dave, Doug Dobson, Rick Durkit, Howard Enkling, John Enright, Andrea Feliz, Ernie Feliz, Judy Ferguson, Richard Ferguson, Marco Fierro, Roy Fuerhern, Toxiy Gasdonie, Sandra Gebbia, Gene & Jane Gemrt, Sharon & Larry Gill, Walt & Darlene Girton, Ron Griffman, Fred Haigh, Jim Hampshire, Joann and Jack Hannigan, Doug Hansen, Mr. and Mrs. Rich Haraldson, Sam Haymart, Broc C. Hiatt, Dan Hjartarson, Ray & Cheryl Husse, Roy and Jan Jackson, Jim Jones, William Kane, Wayne and Kay Karver, Ron Kelly, Bill Kelsey, Rebecca Knight, Keith Krueger, Jack Kunkle, Andy Kurtz, William T. La Pierre, Tracy Lane, Maxine Leather, Jim Lerner, Amy Malloy, Amy Malloy, Ken Martin, Pam & Gail Martin, Bryan Martyn, Judith Masterfield, LaDonna Mayer, Margaret McDermott, Marie and Ralph McMillan, Alice Milbrat, Robert Montgomery, Bob Mulhair, William Munding, Dale Nathan, Ray Nault, Tim & Barb Newman, George Pasquel III, Tina Patel, Rosemary Pere, Dave Perkins, Joe Pogus, Maxine Ragsdale, Robert Raymond, Sarah Reynolds, Court Rich, Randy Rosane, Palmer & Jan Saylor, John Schroeder, Brian Schumacher, H. Shams, Mike Shaus, H. Allen Shockley, Maynard Simenson, Morris Simpson, Larry Sirios, Gene Slechta, Ralph Slovan, Tana Smith, Les Stapleton, Jim Stewart, Sharon Stinard, Barry Stutter, Tami Tack, Jerry Thacher, Darrell Touitt, Cheryl Toy, Matt Tulman, Marlow E. Urdahl, Margaret Urdahl, Jeff Van Hook, Dave Vander Meulen, Carole Vander Meulen, Ann Weber, Ed Weber, Thomas Weill, Donna Whalen, Jim Whalen, Jack White, Berwyn Wilbrink, Dolly and Louie Winkelmann, and Tom Wolf

Staff and Consultant Team Present: John Pein, ADOT; Andy Smith, ADOT; Dianne Kresich, ADOT; Pete Lima, Lima & Associates; Thomas Herz, Lima & Associates; Hugh Louch, Cambridge Systematics; Paul Waung, DMJM+HARRIS; and Peggy Fiandaca, Partners for Strategic Action, Inc.

A. MEETING OVERVIEW

The format of the Public Open House was an informal opportunity for participants to review the displays related to both studies and ask questions of the consulting team and staff. Two brief presentations were provided by Andy Smith, ADOT Project Manager. He explained that the meeting purpose was to obtain public input regarding the two corridors. The study areas for each corridor are:

US 60 Study Area: Examines a corridor that includes a possible reroute of a seven mile segment of US 60 through Arizona State Lands between Mountain View Road and the Renaissance Festival area parallel to and south of the current US 60. In addition, the existing US 60 is under study from Renaissance Festival area to Florence Junction.

Williams Gateway Study Area: Corridor running southeasterly from Loop 202 (Santan) in Maricopa County between the General Motors Desert Proving Grounds and Williams Gateway Airport heading east and terminating at US 60 in Pinal County.

Andy presented the information collected regarding each corridor, provided an overview of the study process being utilized, and what was learned from the data and conversations held to date.

B. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Following is a summary of questions (Q.), answers (A.), and comments (C.) made following the presentation.

- Q. The study needs to coordinate with SRP and Williams Gateway
- A. The study is undertaking significant coordination with SRP, MAG Williams Gateway, Arizona State Lands, the County, and jurisdictions.

- Q. The turning lanes on US 60 into Peralta Trails are too short.
- A. We will forward your comment to the responsible ADOT Phoenix Traffic Engineering.

- Q. What about funding?
- A. Pinal County has a ½ cent sales tax; the County can work with developers, and can partner with ADOT.
- Q. What about all the previous studies? Nothing has been done. Right now it takes an hour to go from Ironwood to Mountain Brook.
- A. We are taking a fresh look and considering other corridors.
- C. There is an inequity in funding – Maricopa County is taking share of Pinal County money.
- A. MAG has ½ cents sales tax and an adopted regional transportation plan.
- C. We need to have a parallel facility from end of Superstition Freeway to Florence Junction.
- A. That is why we are here – to get your comments. As well as to see if a parallel facility is needed or if better access management planning required.
- Q. What is the timeframe?
- A. The Corridor Definition Studies will be completed by November 2005. Currently, there is no timeframe for other studies or construction.
- Q. US 60 has safety issues – there is only one route to Mesa – there is no alternative.
- A. ADOT is concerned about safety and the study is addressing safety issues.
- Q. What is meant by “to the Board”?
- A. State Transportation Board which is comprised of seven members from various parts of the state.
- Q. There was money to widen US 60 to 10 lanes at one time. Pinal County said, “Take that money and do a bypass. Pinal County has been working on acquiring the right of way (ROW)”. So where did the money go? People in the area felt 10 lanes was unacceptable.
- A. There was never money identified for a 10-lane facility. The total funds committed (\$12.8 million) in FY 2000 were to acquire ROW, design and construct traffic interchanges through Gold Canyon starting in FY 2001. The State Transportation Board dropped those projects and committed the funds (FY 2001-2005) to the flyover of US 60 and SR 79. The projects listed would have been interim improvements to US 60.
- C. Public transportation as a means to solve our transportation problems.

- Q. Article in today's newspaper regarding the MAG Williams Gateway study. It said it only goes to the Pinal County line. Will that study have an impact on where the road is directed into Pinal County?
- A. Maricopa Association of Governments is looking at an alignment and will be examining two, three miles into Pinal County. ADOT's study is working in cooperation with their efforts and will determine what type of facility and general location to continue east to US. 60.*
- Q. Where is funding coming from?
- A. Funding sources have not been identified.
- Q. MAG is deciding what alternative in May, and will Pinal County be stuck with the alignment? It's important where the road is aimed.
- A. Same answer as above at *.
- Q. What are you doing (ADOT) in the planning on Williams Gateway in Pinal County?
- A. The four corridors under study are to determine the need, type, and jurisdictional road responsibility and the recommendations will be presented to ADOT's Board. Further direction will come from the Board to either conduct engineering studies to determine alignment or to do nothing (would revert to local cities, towns, or County).
- Q. Pinal County is going to grow more – it is like the “tail wagging the dog.” Why would ADOT put a roadway through developments that are already in place, doesn't it make the process more time consuming?
- A. This study is not determining an alignment, only a corridor. Your input is to assist in defining the width.
- Q. Could the MAG Williams Gateway Freeway stop at Pinal County line if it's not appropriate to go any further?
- A. Yes, but consideration will be given to the need of lesser facilities than a freeway.
- Q. When can Pinal County get a study that identifies an alignment with funding?
- A. Will have a better idea upon the completion of these efforts.
- Q. What are the parameters of where the Williams Gateway alignment might hook up to 60?
- A. This study will determine. (See answer above *)

- C. The loop from Goldfield to the Renaissance Festival is a waste of money. You should consider doing a bunch of laterals off US 60. This would make more sense.
- C. I have a problem with the bypass. In Peralta we have all the local traffic as well as the through traffic. It should come down farther. There is nothing to handle local traffic.
- Q. If the alignment for the corridor is bypassed, then what happens to the existing US 60?
- A. The current US 60 could revert to a Pinal County road.
- Q. Regarding accident rates – what is an acceptable level? Is it 2004 or 2005 level? What is an acceptable death level? We have had several deaths in recent months in the area.
- A. ADOT's goal is to provide safe state highways throughout Arizona. Safety is one of the key criteria that the US 60 Corridor Definition Study will consider in developing a corridor concept and providing recommendations to the State Transportation Board.
- Q. What are the timeframes for completion? It is very frustrating. We need it sooner.
- A. We are moving as fast as possible if we go too fast we could miss future issues that have yet to be identified or evaluated.

C. COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DISPLAY BOARDS

As participants reviewed display boards they had an opportunity to write down any comments they might have. Following are those comments collected.

- Pinal County impact fees should be increased to obtain funds for infrastructure.
- Amen!
- Pinal County has a ½ transportation tax. Where is the money? Is it not available to move the US 60 corridor from a study into the realm of reality?

D. QUESTIONNAIRE INPUT RESPONSES

A comment feedback questionnaire was distributed and the responses were summarized. Participants were asked what study corridor they were commenting on and their responses were organized based on what corridor they indicated.

GENERAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS - WILLIAMS GATEWAY CORRIDOR SELECTED

- Alternative #3 is the preferred route, as a councilmember from AJ. However, we realize Option 3 creates problems with the full interchange at Ellsworth, so we strongly support Alternative 5. Alternative 7 displaces too many existing residents to serve a few.
- Because of the Williams Gateway Airport, the Plan #7 makes the most sense due to airport traffic and if it leads into an area already developed. They are only large-acre properties, so only a few families would have to be moved. Just like Lehi for the 202 Loop.

GENERAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS - US 60 CORRIDOR SELECTED

- An additional east-west route is needed now in developed communities. If 60 is jammed up, either accident or event traffic, no alternative "back way" is available to get out, to Mesa, for example, especially emergency traffic (can get from Kings Ranch to Superstition, but that's it).
- Highway 60 at Gold Canyon is at capacity. During normal times when the Renaissance Festival and LPGA Golf Tournament are on, traffic is stopped for several miles. There is a very serious safety problem today. If Highway 60 is blocked by an accident (which it was this month), there is no way to get to a hospital in case of a medical emergency. There needs to be an alternative route soon!
- Given the rapid population growth along the current US 60, I am concerned with the safety of residents of Gold Canyon when traffic increases above current levels. For this reason I strongly believe that the US 60 bypass should be completed as soon as possible. I also believe that the bypass should be continued on to the Hwy 79 Junction. Growth will extend along the 60 that far before any bypass can be completed.
- 60 Corridor should go to Hwy 79 near Florence. Population is understated for your study. Growth is expanding from 15,000, not the 6,000 in the study. Current entrance to Peralta Trails is inadequate.
- US 60 Corridor should extend from the end of the freeway to Florence Junction. This bypass is needed in the next five years. Currently if US 60 is closed east of Goldfield Road, Gold Canyon residents have no access to hospitals in Mesa.
- US 60 corridor should extend from the end of the freeway to Florence Junction. This bypass is needed now. If there is a medical emergency in Gold Canyon, the US 60 is the only access to hospitals, etc. With planned

homes coming to the area, US 60 traffic will only get worse and safety jeopardized.

- If the legislature changes the amount of land to be sold in a year, US 60 will be jammed with travelers and construction well before 2016 or 2020. At the present time, US 60 is overused and needs relief from the Apache Junction line to Florence Junction. The fair and golf tournament were good examples of how 60 can be a mess.
- I have three priorities. 1. We need one additional road to get from Gold Canyon to Apache Junction when accidents happen – you can't get anywhere. 2. Please put in some additional roads before the population grows out of control. 3. The road from San Tan to Florence Junction would be wonderful, as it would take a lot of traffic off of US 60.
- We need more highways. Today traffic was down to one lane between Bashas and Texaco. It was stop and go - nearly had two rear-enders. You could also widen the existing 60. We need a bypass!
- Maricopa (MAG) and Pinal (PAG) need to coordinate their studies. Seems inconceivable that they are doing independent studies.
- Local and thru-traffic needs to be separated. US 60 Corridor should be constructed to Florence Junction. With growth, it is inevitable.
- Mountain Brook and Gold Canyon "Kings" Ranch Road have no other means of access.
- To say the US 60 Corridor is important to Gold Canyon is an understatement! We in Gold Canyon have seen the traffic on US 60 grow to the point of inconvenience, frustration, and at times a threat to our safety. The big trucks and rigs that have traveled US 60 for years do run the red lights on occasion as they travel through Gold Canyon. I fear that in the future there will be a terrible accident. Another serious matter is that there is only one way in and out of Gold Canyon. When traffic is heavy from October through April, travel on 60 is slow and we have no alternative roadways. PLEASE DO A HIGHWAY BYPASS OF GOLD CANYON! PLEASE!!!
- The challenge of the US 60 through Gold Canyon is that it has to carry all the through traffic plus the local traffic. A bypass was proposed to carry the through traffic. It seems that the bypass should come in beyond proposed mile marker 207 or the same problem will occur down the road beyond mile marker 207.

- Extend bypass to Florence Junction, cheaper to do it now than 10 – 20 years from now. There are already talks of developing 1500 homes in the El Camino Viejo area.
- Please consider the US 60 corridor (bypass) sooner than later. Why? (1) 202 completed 07. (2) 40 sq. file A-3 – annexing 37NS; (3) Gold Canyon highest value houses? Demand by developers in Pinal County.
- I am in favor of studying the extension of the US 60 bypass to Florence Junction where there is an existing interchange.
- The US 60 is in need of immediate relief. The traffic is very heavy, even when there are no special events. High semi's and mining trucks speed at over 70 mph every day. The Peralta Road intersection needs a traffic light and extended turn lane before someone is killed there. US 60 bypass should be an extension of freeway with exit to Gold Canyon. Are so many studies needed? Cost could be used to build roads. Bypass should come back into 60 closer to Florence Junction.
- Developer should help pay for entrance to residential areas.
- Extend the US 60 corridor bypass all the way to Florence Junction. Provide better left turn space from US 60 eastbound at Peralta Road.
- We would like additional information as to why US 60 (bypass) Corridor Definition Study (so far) precludes connection of bypass to US 79 if future population growth warrants same. Concern is for a potential bottleneck between mile marker 207 and Florence Junction mile marker 212 – especially given rapidly increasing long-haul trucking rigs already impacting US 60.
- Please do not stop the proposed bypass just east of the Renaissance Festival grounds. If you're going to do anything, take it all the way to Florence Junction with exits to the festival and Gold Canyon. It would seem to be a much better use of our tax dollars. I am very saddened to see so much of the desert disappearing due to population growth. Can you provide for adequate preservation of this sensitive land mass?

GENERAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS - BOTH CORRIDORS SELECTED

- Forget US 60 Corridor loop from Greenfield to Renaissance – extend Gateway Corridor along Elliott or Pecos East to 79 Junction and have north/south laterals at Superstition Mtn. Blvd., Kings Ranch Road, and Peralta Trail that connect. Additional east/west roads can be constructed between these roads as development occurs.
- We need to have the reroute of US 60 go from the end of the current US 60 (Superstition Freeway) all the way to Florence Junction parallel - 60 through Gold Canyon and not connecting with it until the intersection at Florence Junction. There would need to be an intersection road from the reroute to accommodate traffic coming into the Renaissance Fair area. Traffic proceeding to Globe and Florence should be routed to the Williams Gateway connection at Florence Junction.
- We have lived in Gold Canyon for five years. The traffic flow gets heavier and heavier. It seems like there are more and more accidents. When accidents happen, US 60 has been closed for hours. For both safety (access to medical services) and convenience (access to and from our home), this becomes more and more of a concern to us. The future construction of businesses and more homes starting now will only add to this potential danger.
- With the increase in the housing market at such a rapid pace, improved and additional transportation is vital for these new communities to thrive and be successful.
- Suggested corridor is inadequate – should go all of the way to Florence Junction!
- Please separate through traffic from local traffic in whatever decision you make. Please connect Williams Gateway to 60 near Florence Junction.
- I really feel a Williams Field corridor that should run parallel to Route 60 and adjoining Route 60 at Florence Junction would be the smartest and best expressway – then arterial routes from Peralta Road, Kings Ranch Road, Superstition Mountain Road could run south and meet the Williams Corridor.
- It would be a good idea to adopt California's highway lighting philosophy to only light ramp areas. Every car already has two lights on it, so it is not necessary to light the whole freeway. Also, where light is used, only full cutoff fixtures (as defined by the CESNA) should be used. Money saved by

not installing excessive fixtures could be used to make the roads wider. A lot of really bad lighting has been installed on Arizona freeways. Lighting a freeway from the side of the road instead of from above really causes a lot of eyestrain.

- Public transportation availability? Greater publicity of public meetings.
- Please send the bypass all the (way) to Florence Junction or at least mile marker 208. I and a lot of other people live right on US 60. There's too much traffic, it's too loud, the trucks are moving too fast, and I can't get to sleep at night without earplugs. I also work at Fuji Chemical on Pecos and Mountain Road. Please get these roads in ASAP. Thanks.

GENERAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS – NO BOX SELECTED GROUP

- I am concerned about the safety of the left turn lane from eastbound US 60 to northbound Peralta Road. Lane is short and uneven. Speeds are high, creates a very dangerous situation.
- My question is how many people need to be maimed or killed at these lights. Highways with lights kill; drivers are not familiar, rear-end others at these lights.
- Thank you for your time and effort!
- I would have liked to see the green arrow boards for direction (to the meeting). I think we missed giving an overview of the ADOT process. I believe the public thinks they were here to hear about a new road. The process explanation is very important, mostly because of the previous DCR study and the Florence Junction – Superior pre-design studies. Confusion makes the public believe we are incompetent or liars. Impressive turnout. Thank you. Thank you also for the e-mail notification.
- We need a frontage road from Superstition Mountain Drive to Mountain View, parallel to US 60, which would help alleviate things till the bypass comes in. At El Camino Viejo and 60, there is a mobile home court, some business, and an Ace Hardware coming in. Will there be a wide enough corridor there? A longer bypass down to Florence Junction would be preferable. I think if studies and planning and engineering (are) done ASAP, our county officials will help you find funding so freeways are done before everything grinds to a halt.

CHALLENGES

Participants had an opportunity to review nine major challenges that were listed on the input form. They were:

1. Rapid Population Growth
2. Development of State Lands
3. Annexation Issues
4. Traffic Increase
5. Safety
6. Regional and Statewide Connectivity
7. Local Access
8. Environmental Sensitivity
9. Funding

They were asked to identify the five major challenges that were most important to them. Following are the number of responses correlated to which corridor study they were responding to.

Williams/Gateway Group Responses: (2 Respondents)

Challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Responses	2	2				1	1		2

US 60 Corridor Group Responses: (23 Respondents)

Challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Responses	18	7	3	18	18	6	11	5	6

Both Corridors Group Responses: (12 Respondents)

Challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Responses	8	6	5	10	7	1	7	3	2

No Box Selected Group Responses: (5 Respondents)

Challenge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Responses	3	1		4	2	2	1	1	1

The participants were able to provide their comments related to each of the challenges. Following is a summary of the comments.

1. RAPID POPULATION GROWTH

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- We need more highways.
- ADOT should be pro-active to provide for US 60 bypass, before development takes place and construction would be less intrusive.

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- Quick growth in north Pinal County means more traffic problems and accidents.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- This is a known statement and the east valley is not prepared for it.
- Sprawl is primary concern. Growth is not the problem, “leap-frog” development is.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF ARIZONA LANDS

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- State land is subject of contention between Apache Junction and Gold Canyon, because of commercial development.

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- Preserve green spaces along corridors, parks, etc.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Proper planned development and preservation is extremely important, and the time to do it was yesterday!

3. ANNEXATION ISSUES

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- When will Apache Junction decide on Gold Canyon's fate and how much leverage do they play in the corridor design (Apache Junction)?

4. TRAFFIC INCREASE

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- We need more highways.
- Going to explode and the need for highway bypass is now.

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- This (is) direct issue of #1.
- Why does a seasonal activity (Renaissance Festival) seem to be a major barrier to a corridor definition?

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Great need to direct through traffic away from local traffic.
- Side road for Kings Ranch, Peralta & Superstition
- You can never build enough roads/highways to end congestion. More roads = more traffic. The New Jersey Turnpike was supposed to end traffic woes forever – didn't happen!

5. SAFETY

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- US 60 is not safe. Speeding trucks and traffic have caused several bad accidents.
- Peralta Road entry (lack of) especially with school buses.
- In case of medical emergency, if highway is closed due to accident, there is no alternate route from Gold Canyon to Mesa.

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- Too many serious accidents have already happened on Route 60 Gold Canyon area.
- Crossovers on a state highway are suicide without lights or underpasses.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Highway 60 is the only east/west corridor with a series of "cul de sacs". To go anywhere, residents in community must enter heavy traffic on 60 and getting heavier every year!
- We need more highways.
- 60 unsafe now due to growing development and high speeds, poor turn lanes.
- Ingress and digress off of 60 to developments, etc.

6. REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE CONNECTIVITY

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- Refer to #5 – start us off with traffic lights.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Important to redistribute traffic and lighten the load on present highways.

7. LOCAL ACCESS

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- US 60 is a parking lot on weekends and will be an impossibility to traverse after 320 acres worth of Peralta is sold. And the 1200 homes east of the same area built in 2006.
- Need better traffic flow through the east corridor – allow better access to west.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Give Renaissance Festival their own interchange.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- When development takes place, some more stringent rules on NOT allowing development by strip and revegetate as has been done in the past.

9. FUNDING

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- When we buy in Mesa, we receive none of that tax money to help us in Pinal County.

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- How and where do we obtain funding without businesses – how do we obtain business (economic development) without good highway access?

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Get planning and everything done. Pinal County will help.
- Unfortunately we always seem to be under funded!

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

Participants were asked to identify any other challenges that they wanted the study to consider. Following are the responses.

US 60 Corridor Group Responses:

- Public transportation
- Timeline – how can such a major undertaking get done before traffic conditions are unsafe and unbearable?
- The Maricopa Flood District needs more on its responsibility to allow US 60 to move forward.

- Highway 60 is backed up for miles during Renaissance and LPGA Tournaments. Highway 60 is at capacity during most hours during the winter. With projected growth in Pinal County, this becomes an impossible situation.
- Let's not delay! No further studies! We need the corridor now!

Both Corridors Group Responses:

- Historical significant areas identified before decisions made.
- Availability of public transportation. Bypass should extend to Hwy. 79. Instead of "trying to keep up" with increase growth – try getting ahead of the curve.
- Bypass should be dropped and east/west corridor from Gateway be more seriously considered.

No Box Selected Group Responses:

- Should plan for 6 – 8-lane highways in areas so you won't need to add lanes in a few years at a higher cost!